General John W. Hendrix
Commanding General of Forces Command with Headquarters at Fort McPherson, Georgia

Transforming the Army to Meet the 21st Century Threat

Interview by Patrecia Slayden Hollis, Editor

Q *As the Commanding General of V Corps and the US Task Force Hawk, part of NATO's Operation Allied Force, what was your initial mission and how did it change en route to Kosovo?*

A Task Force Hawk was a unique organization specifically configured to conduct Apache deep strikes against the Army of Yugoslavia that was destroying the population and property of the small province of Kosovo. Initially, we were to deploy to Macedonia and attack into Kosovo. But the mission changed substantially when we were en route—Macedonia wouldn't give us permission to conduct operations from there, so we went into Albania.

There are dramatic differences between Macedonia and Albania. Macedonia was secure and had good airfields, an established military logistical support base and a border into Serbia that was out-posted with observers. In Albania, we had none of these and very severe terrain. We had 9,000-foot mountains that created a narrow, predictable corridor through which we'd have to attack from the Albanian border.

The threat to our forces in Albania was significantly greater. Large portions of Albania are affected by large, well organized criminal elements that are well armed—they have hundreds of thousands of former Soviet automatic weapons and artillery pieces. The Army of Yugoslavia routinely crossed the Albanian border to attack the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] that based a lot of its operations in the northeastern part of Albania along the Kosovo border. Our forces were a 10-minute flight away from 60 or so Army of Yugoslavia aircraft and vulnerable to Yugoslavian ground force attacks out of Montenegro along our north and northwestern borders. So, en route, we restructured the force and added a Bradley battalion and other assets for ground security and more artillery [see Figure 1].

The artillery part of the task force is interesting. We took a combination of 105-mm howitzers, Paladins and MLRS [multiple-launch rocket systems] that were ATACMS [Army tactical missile system]-capable. We needed to fire SEAD [suppression of enemy air defenses] for the Apaches from various weapon systems, with the option of air assaulting the 105s closer to the Kosovo border to increase our range.

We had plans to synchronize all our artillery plus other deep attack assets, such as Army aviation, Air Force air and naval fires, both missile and high performance aircraft—plus NATO assets. This was a very complex operation, and our fire supporters were well prepared and performed superbly.

Q *In Task Force Hawk, what lessons did we learn about targeting and deep operations for joint and combined small-scale contingency operations?*

A We learned, or relearned, a number of important lessons. We learned the first lesson very quickly: we can't always do in an actual operation what we do in a lot of our Warfighter exercises. In most of our BCTP [Battle Command Training Program] Warfighters, we attack multiple times in one night with the same formation. For example, we have one Apache battalion make two deep attacks in the same night and do that repetitively for nights on end.

The fact is, we can't do that. We don't have the helicopter crews, other personnel or time to plan the attack routes and conduct all the required coordination. We have to take a more realistic approach in our exercises.

Now, in the BCTP's defense, the Warfighter we conducted just before we deployed did more to prepare TF Hawk for overall operations than any single training piece. It was excellent training.

Lesson Number Two is that synchronization among the Air Force, Army and Navy at the procedural level is more difficult than in our peacetime training exercises. We need a fuller, more realistic integration of the procedures from each of the services into our training exercises to prepare us for joint contingencies. And every time we conduct deep operations, they're going to be joint.

It was interesting that we had no problems with some things people thought we would—for example we put our attacks on the Air Force ATO [air tasking order]. We had been doing that in V Corps in our training exercises for more than a year. When the attacks are on the ATO, they are resourced with air assets for JSEAD [joint SEAD] and get complete air caps, when needed, and access to more commo—assets not organic to the Army.

Another very important lesson we learned is that the DOCC [deep operations coordination cell] is a complex, robust organization that's difficult to man out-of-hide but critical to our operations. It's not on any corps or division MTOE [modified table of organization and equipment].

The DOCC integrates deep operations into the larger operations planned at the division, corps or CINC [commander-in-chief] levels and involves joint resources, at a minimum, and often allied resources. It's a unique organization of fire support element, aviation, G2 and G3 personnel who must plan and coordinate critical operations, say, to send helicopters deep across enemy lines after high-payoff targets.

The DOCC calls for more assets than we can take from a division and stretches a corps. The bottom line is that it's time to put the DOCC on the MTOE and train with it in combined arms and joint exercises.

Q *In Albania, you had three chains of command (see Figure 2). What kinds of challenges did you face with three chains of command?*

A We faced the same challenges others have faced in military operations in the past and will face in the future. If you read about command and control issues as far back as World War I and, especially, World War II, we had coalition chains of commands and US chains of command. Such a structure always carries a fair number of challenges.

I had very clear operational bosses in the US chain of command and many of my bosses wore two hats. The Commander of Joint Task Force Noble Anvil was Admiral Jim Ellis who wore his US hat of CINCNAV [Commander-in-Chief of the US Navy in Europe] and his NATO hat of CINCSOUTH [Commander-in-Chief, South]. General Wes Clark was the US CINCEUR [Commander-in-Chief of US Forces in Europe] and NATO's SACEUR [Supreme Allied Commander in Europe]. We kept our chains separate and distinct. Fortunately, because the US brings a lot to the fight, US officers are often dual-hatted.

- Task Force Command Group (V Corps Headquarters-Minus)
- V Corps Artillery Headquarters-Minus
- 41st Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters
- 1st Battalion, 27th Field Artillery (Multiple-Launch Rocket System)-Plus
- 12th Aviation Brigade-Minus
- 11th Attack Helicopter Regiment (Two Squadrons of Apaches)
- 2d BCT, 1st Armored Division-Minus (Force Protection)
  - 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry (Mechanized) Augmented with A/4-27 FA Paladin and FA Target Acquisition Section
  - 2d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment Augmented C/1-319 FA M119
- 7th Corps Support Group-Minus
- 32d Signal Battalion-Minus
- Military Police Detachment
- Psychological Operations Detachment
- Special Operations Command and Control Element

Figure 1: Task Force Hawk Task Organization

Initially, we had some difficulty figuring out who controlled what portions of the air space because no land component commander was designated for the operation. But our real challenges were not so much chain of command or command and control but determining the *right* thing to do. Who should approve targets—the CINC, JTF commander or air component commander? We had a lot of US and NATO political constraints to work through. Overall, I think our command and control worked very well.

Q *What are the contingency options the Initial/Interim BCT [brigade combat team] brings to the CINCs? What are the challenges to achieving these capabilities?*

A The BCT brings the CINCs significantly increased strategic responsiveness and flexibility. This means a CINC can have a lethal, survivable and mobile task force of brigade size on the ground very quickly—96 hours, anywhere in the world. That's an incredible capability.

The overall goal for the future is to increase the deployability of the entire Army with a division on the ground anywhere in the world in 120 hours and five divisions in 30 days.

The problem is today we have the world's best Army for what it was created to do. But the threat we were designed to overwhelm doesn't exist—we won the Cold War. We developed an Army that could fight the former Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, on the plains of Europe and win.

Instead, we now face a variety of regionally based instabilities throughout the world, involving lingering, often increased, ethnic conflicts. These small-scale contingencies call for a credible force to get there quickly—hopefully, to deter the crisis from becoming war. We need lighter, more mobile vehicles that are more rapidly deployable, even on our lightest aircraft.

Tactical/Operational (US)	Title X (US)	Tactical/Operational (NATO)**
Joint Chiefs of Staff	Headquarters, Department of the Army	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
Commander-in-Chief, US Army Europe	Seventh Army	Allied Forces South
Joint Task Force Noble Anvil*	V Corps	Albanian Forces (NATO)
Task Force Hawk	Task Force Hawk	Task Force Hawk

*Commanded by a three-star admiral; included an air component commander (ACC) but no land component commander (LCC).
**On order chain of command anticipated but not activated.

Figure 2: Task Force Hawk Chains of Command

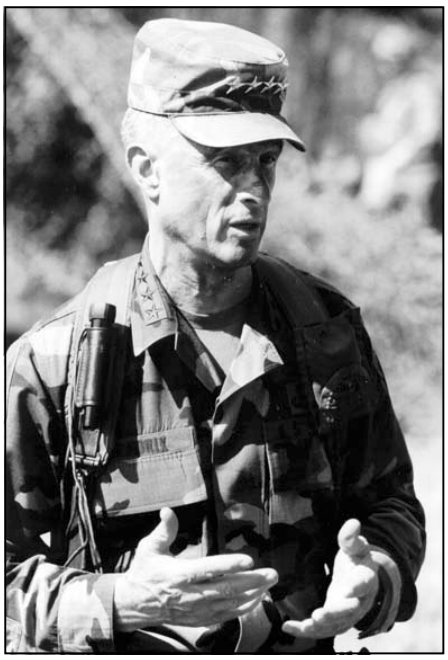
But if war already has broken out, then we need to bring in a larger, more lethal and tactically capable warfighting force and do that fast and well. There is no intent in the transformation to divest the Army of its capability to fight a high-intensity conflict. But this future force cannot require the mountains of logistical support that our present force requires.

The old concept of the force was "Give me your best punch and I'll take it and then punch you out." The future force concept must be "You can't hit me, but I can hit you and stop you in your tracks." The concept of the future force is fundamentally different.

One challenge is to convince our Congressional leaders that the concept warrants funding. We can't transform the force and change combat vehicles to make the Army more deployable without additional funding.

A second challenge is to work with the industrial community to refine and incorporate the new technologies we need for our objective force. Some of the technologies are already out there, and others will take more time. We also have some design and developmental work to do. We need a variety of complementary weapons and digital communications and situational awareness systems.

Q *The Army has established the requirement for the Interim BCT to have an IAV [intermediate armored vehicle]-based 155-mm self-propelled howitzer in FY03 to FY10. How important is it for the FA in the Interim BCT to have the same tactical mobility as the supported force?*



GEN Hendrix mentors at the JRTC.

A Absolutely critical. The tactics clearly demand artillery with equal or even superior mobility to its supported force. It will require eight to 10 years to bring all of the Interim BCT combat pieces together with a common chassis that will reduce our logistical consumption (common maintenance procedures, parts, fuel, etc.). We can't delay the start of the objective artillery system so it isn't ready with the rest of the force.

Now, in the short-term, we have to use what's immediately available—admittedly very different from the objective force. For the Initial BCT, we'll use state-of-the-art, off-the-shelf IAVs slightly modified to meet our requirements. The artillery for the Initial BCT will be M198s. The Initial BCT will have three maneuver battalions, a reconnaissance battalion and an artillery battalion.

Executing the first Initial BCT will take about another year and one-half—it will go to the JRTC [Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana] for its first CTC [Combat Training Center] rotation in December 2001. Fundamentally, the BCT will give us more soldiers on the ground and have lighter, more tactically mobile combat vehicles—they could be tracked or wheeled.

Q *What is your philosophy for training live-fire combined arms operations?*

A Live fire is essential—from the individual soldier firing his weapon up to the highest level of collective units we can afford to live fire. Generally, a soldier will master dry-fire techniques very quickly, whether using his M16 rifle, a tank or howitzer. But, when he live fires, there's another level of learning that takes place that he really can't get anywhere else. He needs to know firsthand the effects of his weapon and have confidence in it and other systems on the battlefield. And that's especially important when it comes to artillery.

I'm concerned that we aren't replicating the devastating effects of artillery rounds at the NTC [National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California] or JRTC. We have lasers that replicate our tanks and anti-tank systems and our small arms fire. But with artillery, we haven't found a good way to replicate its fire.

Until soldiers and leaders see a battalion fire for effect, they don't understand the impact of artillery on the battlefield. And once they've seen it, they'll never forget it. But until they do, they aren't as focused as they need to be on bringing artillery into their close fight.

Combined arms live-fire exercises make us pull it all together—they train the "nuts and bolts" of our business. One caution is that ammunition costs a lot of money, so commanders up and down the chain must ensure they use all rounds effectively to get the most out of our training.

Q *What message would you like to send Army and Marine Field Artillerymen stationed around the world?*

A Be very proud. You are part of the greatest military force the world has ever known. The US military provides security, stability and *hope* for people around world. Daily, you are entrusted with the sons and daughters of America and must accomplish critical missions around the globe—awesome responsibilities.

And after watching from the inside for more than 30 years, I can tell you, you are up to the challenge.

General John W. Hendrix assumed command of Forces Command, with its headquarters at Fort McPherson, Georgia, on 23 November 1999. In his previous assignment, he was the Commanding General of V Corps in Germany where he commanded the US Task Force Hawk, part of NATO's Operation Allied Force that stopped the ethnic conflict in Kosovo. He also commanded the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and the Infantry Center and Fort Benning in Georgia. General Hendrix was Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations of the US Army in Europe, Assistant Division Commander of the 1st Armored Division during Operation Desert Storm and Executive Officer to NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe/US Commander-in-Chief of Europe.